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UNCLAS ADANA 000005

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 30, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for December 30, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir's BAKEV (Wildflower Women's Center) in the Baglar quarter conducted a survey on women and family. Results of the survey showed 86 percent of the families in the Baglar quarter were suffering seriously from very low standards of living and most families were on the brink of starvation. According to the survey 31 percent of women suffered from violence and 51 percent of women were made to marry at a minor age.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: According to the daily, Hakkari Governor Erdogan Gurbuz did not provide information to the Turkish Parliament's commission probing the Semdinli Case allegedly on grounds that he did not want to divulge state secrets. Ozgur Gundem interpreted Gurbuz's attitude as an

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attempt to hold "JITEM establishment" immune against the prosecution process.

EVRENSEL: Zubeyir Amber, Hatay deputy from ANAP (Motherland Party), submitted a question to the Turkish Parliament and solicited information from the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the "secret" NATO radar facility that was established in Hatay's Arsus district. Amber asked which international agreement allowed the building of such a facility to watch Middle East, and which country will make use of that facility.

SABAH / HURRIYET: Van's 3rd Heavy Penalty Court decided Van Centennial University rector Yucel Askin will not be held under arrest during his prosecution process. The court ordered the rector's release today following a unanimous decision.

HURRIYET: Fourth Heavy Penalty Court initiated a lawsuit regarding the case of Hikmet Fidan, former national chairperson of HADEP (People's Democracy Party), who was kidnapped and murdered on July 6. Charges were brought against two of the three defendants in the case claiming that they surrendered Fidan to his assassin. Human Rights Association executives, Bar Association Chairperson Sezgin Tanrikulu, and spokesperson of Kurd-Der (Kurdish Association), which is known for its anti-PKK stance, attended the court hearing as observers. Five of the attorneys for Fidan's family did not attend the court hearing on grounds that they were being threatened by the PKK.

OZGUR GUNDEM: On the eve of the New Year, farmers breeding turkeys have been badly affected by the outbreak of avian influenza in Igdir's Aralik district, and by the Ministry of Agriculture's latest sanctions on the selling of poultry in the markets.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Daily operations at the Habur Border Gate in Sirnak nearly came to a halt because of the ongoing anti-corruption operation at the gate. The daily separately noted that nothing had been done about the well-known and long-established bribery mechanism at the gate.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The grave of a PKK militant was reportedly damaged by unidentified people in Tunceli's Orenonu village. The family of the militant claimed that soldiers damaged the grave as they were returning from a military operation on December 23.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Democratic Society Party administration announced that the governing AK Party and CHP (Republican People's Party), two major parties of Turkey, namely have formed an alliance against the Kurds and dismissed any possibility that would pave the way for lowering the national election threshold.

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